1:Nimuendajú E-5 (1941-1942) 1952
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I. INTRODUCTION

Tribal Name

101 [114] The tribal name has two versions: Tikuna (Tekuna) or Tukuna (Tokuna). Of the earlier writers, Padre Samuel Fritz (1691), Ribeiro de Sampaio (1774), Spix and Martius (1819), and Ayres de Cazal (1831) use the first forms; Acuña (1639), Berredo (1718), and José de Moraes Torres (1759) use the second; Monteiro Noronha (1768) uses both. Apparently, only the first version is used in Peru; in Brazil, however, both forms are in vogue, and it is noteworthy that some travelers (Herndon and Gibbon, 1853; Orton, 1875) employ the term Tikuna in Peru and Tukuna in Brazil.

101 114 The Kayuišána, neighbors of these Indians, call them Tukuna, the form that Koch-Grünberg heard among the Indians of the Rio Apaporis. According to Tessmann, the Tukuna do not have a name for the entire tribe. He quotes Veigl, who says that, although they speak a common language, they regard the tribe as being made up of different nations; this error on Veigl's part may be attributed to the Tukuna use of the Portuguese word "nação" in referring to their clans.

[198] In this lingua franca spoken by the Indians, Tikuna is the most common version; this statement holds true for Brazil as well as for Peru. However, in their own language the Indians of the tribe employ exclusively the form Tukuna, or Tukuna, the first u having a high intonation and a light tonal accent: Tu:'ku:na. I have verified this pronunciation many times and with Indians of different localities.

According to Veigl,[1] the Portuguese called the Tukuna "chumana"—a gross error, since the two tribes are clearly distinct.

Physical Type

141 The Tukuna are of average stature. According to Barbosa Rodrigues, the mean height of six men and six women measured in Tonantins was 149 centimeters and 145 centimeters, respectively,[2] figures which very probably are not accurate.

142 The skin is quite dark. The features of the face are in general coarse, the supraorbital ridges and the cheekbones pronounced. The nose is thick and prominent, the upper jaw strongly developed—not owing to the thickness of the lips but to true prognathism, which becomes immediately apparent when the mouth is agape so that all the teeth are visible. In some exaggerated cases this form of mouth produces an almost Negroid aspect, as Herndon noted among the neighboring Marubo of the Solimões.[3] However, I do not believe that this should be attributed to intermixture.

The iris is dark brown. The eyelid opening is either narrow or medium; the inclination is generally horizontal, with a few cases of obliquity.

During childhood the smooth, thick, black hair is somewhat reddish. Wavy hair is found only in individuals who show other evidences of mixed descent. The eyebrows are normal or scanty; the beard, if it appears at all, is sparse, even at a

[1] Quoted in Tessmann, Die Indianer Nordost-Perús, p. 539; see also Martius, Beiträge zur Ethnographie u. Sprachenkunde, 2:443–483.
[2] Barbosa Rodrigues, Tribu dos Ticunas, p. 52.
[3] Herndon and Gibbon, Exploration of the Valley of the Amazon, 1:243.

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mature age. I knew of only two adult Tukuna with normal moustaches. The pubic hair is always scanty.

Signs of racial intermixture are visible in 20 per cent, more or less, of the members of the tribe—a small percentage, considering that the Tukuna have lived in peaceful contact with civilized persons for two and a half centuries. Evidently the rigid tribal organization into exogamic moieties has prevented unbridled promiscuity.

Defects and diseases.—Serious physical defects of a pathological nature are infrequent. When I inquired about the fate of children born deformed, no one could remember a particular instance. Deformation of the teeth by caries is frequent. Some cases of unilateral blindness the Indians attributed to measles.

Strangely high (2 per cent?) is the incidence of hearing defects, although I have never seen an Indian completely deaf. Defective hearing appears to be hereditary, being more frequent in certain families.

The most damaging diseases are those introduced by the Neobrazilians. Smallpox has ravaged the tribe on various occasions. The first epidemic, which decimated the Omágua in 1649, probably reached the Tukuna as well. Also highly devastating was the smallpox epidemic of 1870, which spread from returning soldiers of the Paraguayan war and almost depopulated certain *igarapés*,[1] such as the Igarapé da Rita.

Formerly there was apparently no malaria or intermittent fever (*impaludismo*) in these tributaries of the Solimões, in spite of the enormous quantities of mosquitoes. But many Tukuna who were taken by their masters to the Javary and Jandiatuba rivers died of this affliction, and others brought it back to the igarapés.

Influenza, catarrh, and other respiratory diseases are frequent but cause less damage among the Tukuna than among the other tribes.

The presence of intestinal worms among these Indians is less common than among the Neobrazilians. There are no venereal diseases, except perhaps among some emancipated families living in promiscuity with the Neobrazilians.

An endemic disease among the Tukuna, which, however, disfigures more than it incommodes, is the *purú-purú*,[2] a skin ailment that results in great irregular patches of a dark bluish color which eventually turns achromatic.

Territory

Formerly the territory of the tribe comprised the jungle centers off the left bank of the Amazon-Solimões from 71° 15′ (Ilha Peruaté) to 68° 40′ W. longitude; its tributaries, the Atacuari, Loretoyacu, Mariuaçú, Tacana, Belém, Cajary, São Jeronymo, and Rita, and the upper course of the drainage which empties into the Putumayo-Içá—the Yahuas, Cotuhé, Poreté, and Jacurapá.

The Tukuna did not then inhabit the banks of the Amazon-Solimões, for fear of the Omágua, who occupied the islands of that river throughout its course in

[1] Terms explained in the Glossary (p. 159) and native words in common use are italicised on their first appearance. Tukuna words are given in a simplified form of Nimuendajú's orthography, which is apparently a normalized phonetic transcription. The following abbreviations are used: P., Portuguese; T., Tukuna; l.g., lingua geral.

[2] *Pinta* or *mal del pinto*, caused by Spirochaeta pintae. In Brazil there are three varieties, called, according to the color of the blotches, "white," "red," and "black." Mexico, *mal del pinto;* Colombia, *carate;* Honduras, *cativi*.—Trans.

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131 Tukuna territory and even far beyond, while the banks of the Putumayo-Içá were
● 101 held by Aruak tribes—the Mariaté, Yumána, and Pasé. To the west they had for neighbors the Yáhua and the Péba. Today this former Tukuna territory is divided among Peru, Colombia, and Brazil.

As the Indians of all these neighboring tribes (with the exception of the Yáhua) became fewer or finally disappeared, the Tukuna began to spread out along both banks and on the islands of the Solimões, where many of them live today, as well as on the lakes and tributaries of the right bank. Similarly, they have settled near the Paraná, on the Camatía and along the lower Jandiatuba. Some of their settlements are on the lower Içá, but representatives of the tribe have appeared most recently on the Auatí-paraná, at approximately 66° 30′ W. longitude. The region of the lower Javary, where they were encountered in the past century, they have since abandoned, and likewise they have abandoned the Poreté region.

The entire Tukuna country is part of the Amazon basin, and in the whole region
133 there is not—in the Brazilian part, at least—even one elevation that merits the name of *serra*, nor can any stones be found except a few gravel beds in the upper courses of the igarapés. Lakes and lacustrine topography are found only in the marginal region of the Solimões and in the lower courses of the igarapés. The jungle centers are firm ground. At some points this solid ground extends to the banks of the Solimões, where it forms enormous bluffs twenty-five meters high or more, which are very apt to crumble, especially in times of excessive runoff, and this causes the inhabitants great inconvenience.

During the summer the low riverbanks are bordered with mud beaches. In the winter they are covered with water and become lacustrine zones, with lakes and sinks in some places more than a league* in width. Few of the numerous islands offer a place of shelter from the regular floods; most of them are inundated in the winter to the point of being uninhabitable. These islands with their low banks are also subject to the effects of erosion and inundation to a prodigious degree, the topography sometimes being completely altered within a few years.

The climate is hot and humid, and one feels the lack of ventilation in the jungle.
132 Annually in June and July there are sudden very marked cold spells, accompanied by strong winds from the southeast (not the southwest!) and by fine rains which last from one to three days.

The year is divided into a rainy winter and a dry summer. The Solimões floods
133 regularly; beginning to rise in December it reaches its highest point (12 m. above the dry level) in March, April, and May, diminishing gradually in June and July. The months of August, September, October, and November witness the drying up of streams, so that the upper courses of the igarapés become unnavigable. However, there are frequently major departures from this pattern.

The virgin Amazonian jungle covers this region throughout. Only at the head-
137 [134] waters of the Igarapé de São Jeronymo are there elevated spots with sandy soil and low vegetation. The jungle itself is rich in vegetable products, of which only timber and rubber are now being exploited.

A few decades ago the region was extremely rich in game, but the rise in price
136 of leather rapidly caused the near extermination of such mammals as the tapir

* The Portuguese league equals 6 kilometers.

[Text continues on page 8]

2: Nimuendajú E-5 (1941-1942) 1948
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THE TUCUNA

By Curt Nimuendaju

HABITAT, HISTORY, AND LANGUAGE

The *Tucuna* (*Tukuna, Ticuna*), not to be confused with the *Tucano,* occupied the jungle tracts of the tributaries of the northern side of the Amazon-Solimões River from long. 71°15′ (Peruaté Island) to 68° 40′ W., and the upper course of the streams on the opposite side of the watershed of the Putumayo-Içá River (map 1, *No. 4;* map 5). They avoided the banks of the Amazon-Solimões, fearing the *Omagua,* their traditional enemies of the islands. When the latter disappeared, the *Tucuna* spread out over the islands and shores of the Solimões as far as the Auatí-Paraná River (long. 66°30′ W.).

The country is flat, covered by Amazonian jungle. A wide strip bordering on the Solimões River is subject to great periodical floods.

The *Tucuna,* inconspicuous in the history of the Amazon, were first mentioned in 1641 by Cristobal d'Acuña.

Rivet (1912 b) designated the *Tucuna* language as "un dialecte arawak très corropu." Only a part of his list of lexicological similarities appears to be valid, especially as he lacked sufficient reference material on the *Tucuna* language. There is, however, no doubt that the *Tucunan* vocabulary has a number of elements which were borrowed from the *Arawakan* languages, as noted also by Brinton (1901) and Tessmann (1930). *Tupí* influence is greater than Rivet supposed, being revealed in the pronouns, which he noted but did not evaluate. Correspondences with *Yurí* are fewer, but not unimportant. It is regrettable that there is not more phonetic material on this language. The *Tucanan* element, which Tessmann states is second in importance, is, as Rivet also noted, very weak. The *Mura* element postulated by Loukotka lacks absolute proof.

Martius called attention to 11 *Ge* elements in *Tucunan;* Rivet added five more examples. (Both Martius and Rivet include *Camacán* and *Masacarian* in the *Ge* family.) But, of Rivet's 16 *Ge* elements, only 4 are valid, 3 being formed of *Camacán* elements and only one of *Ge* elements.

There is, therefore, insufficient evidence for Brinton's, Rivet's, and Loukotka's inclusion of *Tucunan* in the *Arawakan* family. For the present, it is advisable to follow Chamberlain and Tessmann in considering it a separate language.

4: Marcoy T-5 (ca. 1865) 1875 SQ20 Tucuna SQ20

mock. On parting we gave the man some fish-hooks and the woman a pair of scissors which had been notched by long use. This liberality procured from the pair a torrent of thanks from the depths of their throats, besides a present of part of the bananas they had gathered.

We stopped successively at several Ticuna huts, where, without other payment than a trifle gracefully presented to the proprietors, we ate, drank, slept, and collected musical pipes, drums, necklaces, braceleta, coronets, pompons, crests, and other baubles representing the wealth of the country, of which a Parisian bourgeois would have envied us the possession to decorate the walls of his villa at Asnières or Pantin.

The information we obtained on our journey concerning the manners and customs of the Ticunas is limited to the subjoined details. If we do not preface them with any notice of the antecedents of these natives, it is because the thread which connects their present with their past is too slight to sustain a dissertation.

The Ticuna nation, mention of whom occurs as far back as the seventeenth century, occupied, at the time when Pedro Teixeira ascended the river, the space on the left bank comprised between the rivers Ambiacu and Atacoari. On the north its territory was bounded by the Pehua and Yahua Indians; on the east by the Yuris of the river Içá; and on the west by the Orejones of the river Napo. These territorial limits remain still the same, only the numerical strength of the Ticunas is no longer commensurate with the extent of country they formerly occupied. Subjugated, re-subjugated, and catechised in turn by the Portuguese Carmelites and the Spanish Jesuits, who based on the pretensions of their government a claim to the legitimate control of the Ticunas and disputed for possession by force of arms, these natives, already much enfeebled by the contrary influence of the two forces acting upon them during half a century, were repeatedly decimated by the small-pox, that cholera-morbus of the red-skins, which completed the work of the *de Propaganda Fide*. All that now remains of the Ticuna nation forms a population of about one hundred and fifty individuals, all of whom live on the borders of the Atacoari and its two tributaries.[1]

A very odd custom of the Ticunas is the manner in which they receive individuals of another nation than their own. Hardly has such a visitor appeared on the threshold of their hut, than all the Ticunas who may be present seize their lances and present the point at the individual, under pretence of opposing his entrance. The visitor, who is aware that this is only etiquette, thrusts aside with his hand the weapons directed against him, enters the hut and seats himself on the nearest hammock. The majority of the Ticuna huts are provided, like the Brazilian drawing-rooms in the province of Para, with three or four hammocks slung opposite one another. When each hammock is made to swing by its occupant, either to chase the mosquitoes or to cool the air, and all swing together, passing, repassing, and apparently dodging, without ever coming into collision with each other, one might imagine oneself in a lace manufactory with the interminable motion of the bobbins before one's eyes.

The master of the hut then addresses the stranger, and in the hollow ventriloquial

[1] We speak of the Ticunas who are living wild, and not of those individuals of the same nation who have settled during the last twenty-five years in several of the villages on the Amazon.

5: Bates N-5 (1848-1859) 1892
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The original territory of the Tucúna tribe embraced the banks of most of the by-streams, from 40 miles below St. Paulo to beyond Loreto in Peru, a distance of about 200 miles; the tribe, however, is not well-demarcated from that of the Collínas, who appear to be a section of Tucúnas, and whose home extends 200 miles farther to the east.

The only other tribe of this neighbourhood concerning which I obtained any information were the Majerónas, whose territory embraces several hundred miles of the western bank of the river Jauarí, an affluent of the Solimoens, 120 miles beyond St. Paulo. These are a fierce, indomitable, and hostile people, like the Aráras of the river Madeira; they are also cannibals. The navigation of the Jauarí is rendered impossible on account of the Majerónas lying in wait on its banks to intercept and murder all travellers, especially whites.

Four months before my arrival at St. Paulo, two young half-castes (nearly white) of the village went to trade on the Jauarí; the Majerónas having shown signs of abating their hostility for a year or two previously. They had not been long gone, when their canoe returned with the news that the two young fellows had been shot with arrows, roasted, and eaten by the savages. José Patricio, with his usual activity in the cause of law and order, despatched a party of armed men of the National Guard to the place to make inquiries, and, if the murder should appear to be unprovoked, to retaliate. When they reached the settlement of the horde who had eaten the two men, it was found evacuated, with the exception of one girl, who had been in the woods when the rest of her people had taken flight, and whom the guards brought with them to St. Paulo. It was gathered from her, and from other Indians on the Jauari, that the young men had brought their fate on themselves through improper conduct towards the Majeróna women. The girl, on arriving at St. Paulo, was taken care of by Senhor José Patricio, baptised under the name of Maria, and taught Portuguese. I saw a good deal of her, for my friend sent her daily to my house to fill the water jars, make the fire, and so forth. I also gained her goodwill by extracting the grub of an Œstrus fly * from her back, and thus cured her of a painful tumour. She was decidedly the best-humoured and, to all appearance, the kindest-hearted specimen of her race I had yet seen. She was tall and very stout, in colour much lighter than the ordinary Indian tint, and her ways altogether were more like those of a careless, laughing country wench, such as might be met with any day

* A species of Œstrus or gadfly, on the Upper Amazons, fixes on the flesh of man as breeding place for its grub. I extracted five at different times from my own flesh. The first was fixed in the calf of my leg, causing there a suppurating tumour, which, being unaware of the existence of this Œstrus, I thought at first was a common boil. The tumour grew and the pain increased until I became quite lame, and then, on carefully examining the supposed boil, I saw the head of a grub moving in a small hole at its apex. The extraction of the animal was a difficult operation, it being an inch in length and of increasing breadth from head to tail, besides being secured to the flesh of the inside of the tumour by two horny hooks. An old Indian of Ega showed me the most effective way of proceeding, which was to stupefy the grub with strong tobacco juice, causing it to relax its grip in the interior, and then pull it out of the narrow orifice of the tumour by main force.